CCRB INVESTIGATIVE RECOMMENDATION

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Investigator:		Team:	CCRB Case #:		Force	$\overline{\mathbf{Q}}$	Discour	τ		
Ariana Thomas		Squad #13	202004217		Abuse	V	O.L.] Inju	ıry
Incident Date(s)		Location of Incident:	•	P	recinct:	18	Mo. SOI	_	EO S	OL
Thursday, 06/11/2020 10:54 PM		East 174th Street and V	Ward Avenue		43	12	/11/2021		5/4/20	022
Date/Time CV Reported		CV Reported At:	How CV Reported	:	Date/Time	Rece	ived at Co	CRB	1	
Fri, 06/12/2020 12:22 PM		CCRB	Call Processing System			/2020	12:22 PM	Л		
Complainant/Victim	Туре	Home Addre	ess							
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Subject Officer(s)	Shield	TaxID	Command							
1. An officer										
2. POM Bory Echanique	17967	958540	043 PCT							
3. PO JOHN ECHEVARRIA	30847	953836	PBBX SU PST							
4. SGT Joseph Signorile	03197	949663	047 PCT							
5. PO DENNIS VARGAS	07471	957245	PBBX SU PST							
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Officer(s)	Allegation	Investigator Recommendation
Q.POM Bory Echanique	Abuse: Police Officer Bory Echanique failed to provide individuals with a business card.	
R.SGT Joseph Signorile	Abuse: Sergeant Joseph Signorile failed to provide with a business card.	
S.SGT Joseph Signorile	Abuse: Sergeant Joseph Signorile failed to provide individuals with a business card.	
T.PO JOHN ECHEVARRIA	Abuse: Police Officer John Echevarria failed to provide individuals with a business card.	
U.PO DENNIS VARGAS	Abuse: Police Officer Dennis Vargas failed to provide individuals with a business card.	
§ 87(4-b), § 87(2)(g)		

Case Summary

On June 12, 2020, \$87(2)(b) filed this complaint via the CCRB's call processing system on behalf of himself, his friend \$87(2) and his unidentified neighbors.

On June 11, 2020, at approximately 10:54 p.m., at East 174th Street and Ward Avenue in the Bronx,
his friend \$87(2) and a group of individuals, some of whom were playing a dice game,
were standing on the sidewalk in front of Yalla Deli and Grocery. An unmarked car drove past, there
doubled back and drove by again two to five minutes later, this time stopping. PO Echanique said,
"Is everyone doing alright?," then parked the car. PO Echanique, Sgt. Signorile, PO Vargas, and PC
Echevarria exited the car and stopped the group of individuals (Allegation A-C: Abuse of
Authority, \$87(2)(9). PO Echanique and Sgt. Signorile each frisked an unidentified
individual (Allegations D-F: Abuse of Authority, \$87(2)(9)). PO Echanique and Sgt.
Signorile allegedly searched individuals (Allegation G-H: Abuse of Authority, \$87(2)(9)
An unidentified officer allegedly searched (Allegation I: Abuse of Authority, 887(2)(9)
). PO Echanique allegedly patted down [\$87(2)(b)] legs and searched his pants
pockets (Allegations J and K: Abuse of Authority, \$87(2)(9)
that he could be arrested, allegedly threw a boxcutter that was in \$87(2)(b) pocket on the
ground and allegedly said, "People around here stink" (Allegation L: Abuse of Authority,
§ 87(2)(9) ; Allegations M and N: Discourtesy, § 87(2)(9) ; Allegation O: Offensive
Language, \$87(2)(9) . No officers provided \$87(2)(9) or any of the other individuals with
a business card (Allegations P-U: Abuse of Authority, \$87(2)(9)

BWC footage of this incident was obtained from the NYPD Legal Bureau, but only captures the end of the incident. The footage is in IA #123 (**Board Review 01**) and summarized in IA #124(**Board Review 02**). Cellphone footage, which begins after the officers' approached, was obtained from structure via Dropbox. It is located in IA #30 (**Board Review 03**) and summarized in IA #31 (**Board Review 04**). There is no other video evidence in this case.

Findings and Recommendations

Allegation (A) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile stopped §87(2)(6) Allegation (B) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile stopped 887(2)(b) Allegation (C) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile stopped individuals. testified that he, his friend \$87(2) whose last name and contact information he did not know, and about 9 to 11 of his neighbors, whose names and contact information he did not know, were standing on the sidewalk outside Yalla Deli and Grocery (Board Review 05, 06). Six or seven people were playing a dice game for money, but no money was on display. §87(2)(b) watched the dice game and briefly went inside the deli. Besides playing or watching the dice game and going in and out of the deli, no one in the group, including \$87(2)(b) was doing anything else. About two to five minutes after 37(2) exited the deli, a black unmarked sedan drove by on East 174th Street. Two to five minutes later, the car drove back to the intersection going in the opposite direction. PO Echanique, identified via investigation, was driving, and asked if everyone was doing alright. Several of the group responded yes. PO Echanique parked and he, PO Vargas, PO Echevarria, and Sgt. Signorile, all identified via investigation, exited the car. PO Echanique ordered everyone to put their hands up. The group complied, except for \$67(2)(0) who did not raise his hands, but made no movements with his body.

Sgt. Signorile testified that the officers were on patrol in a high crime area when they observed a group of two or three individuals at a high crime corner where there is an ongoing issue with public

alcohol consumption, gambling, robberies, shootings, and stabbings (**Board Review 07**). Sgt. Signorile observed the individuals smoking a lit marijuana cigarette, though he could not say if there was one cigarette being passed around or if they had multiple marijuana cigarettes. He smelled the marijuana through his vehicle's open windows. Besides smoking marijuana, Sgt. Signorile did not witness them committing any other arrestable or summonable offenses. Sgt. Signorile did not recall if he gave any officers any commands or who made the decision to stop the group. (Given Sgt. Signorile's supervisory role, these allegations have solely been plead to him.) No stop report was generated because this was a "probable cause stop, not a Level 3 Terry Stop" (See OPMN). The officers used their discretion and decided not to arrest or issue any summonses to any of the stopped individuals.

PO Vargas' \$87(2)(9)
testified that the officers observed a group of approximately five individuals smoking marijuana and playing dice with money in their hands, which he
recognized as gambling, in front of the deli. PO Vargas observed at least one marijuana cigarette,
though he could not say which member of the group was holding it.
who again the court most only which includes of the group was nothing in
PO Echevarria ^{§ 87(2)(9)}
testified that he observed a group of 8 to 12 males in front of the deli, some of whom were drinking alcohol out of brown paper bags and cups, smoking marijuana cigars, and playing dice and exchanging money, which he recognized as gambling. PO Echevarria did not recall if the group was smoking a single marijuana cigar or multiple, or if they were passing it around. He noted that the group was also in violation of a curfew which was in place at the time, though he clarified that he had been instructed to tell civilians in violation of the curfew to go inside and only to summons or arrest them if they were noncompliant.
PO Echanique \$87(2)(9)
testified that from inside the police car, he observed a group of approximately 10 civilians, all of whom were passing around and smoking multiple marijuana cigarettes. Additionally, some civilians were drinking alcoholic beverages out of bottles, which they put down as the officers approached them on foot.
them on root.
As noted above, did not know the other individuals' names, other than whose last name he did not know, and he was unable to provide any contact information for them. Requests for warrant audits (Board Review 11), Stop Reports (Board Review 12), and Event documents (Board Review 13) were all returned negative. Additionally, the officers failed to prepare memo book entries regarding this incident (Board Review 14-17), and there is no BWC footage (Board Review 18) of this portion of the incident (See OPMNs).
§ 87(2)(g)
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Allegation (D) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Bury Echanique frisked 887(2)(b) Allegation (E) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile frisked 887(2)(b)
Allegation (F) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile frisked [807(2)(b)]
Allegation (G) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Bory Echanique searched individuals.

Allegation (I) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile searched Allegation (I) Abuse of Authority: An officer searched \$87(2)(b)

testified that PO Echanique and Sgt. Signorile, identified via investigation, approached a few teenagers in the group and searched their pockets. PO Echanique first searched one of the teenagers and Sgt. Signorile searched another. recorded this on his cellphone. PO Echanique then approached sarched who was sitting on a crate, and searched him. In total, four or five members of the group were searched, one by Sgt. Signorile, and two or three by PO Echanique; did not say who searched the other individual(s). Only two of the individuals who were searched had been playing the dice game, though sarches entailed and made no mention of anyone being frisked.

In \$87(2)(0) cellphone video (**Board Review 03**), beginning at the 00:12 minute mark of the media player timestamp (visible at the bottom of the screen), the camera pans to a teenage Black male with an Afro haircut, who is wearing a teal tracksuit and holding a bottle of orange soda in his left hand and a cellphone in his right hand. At 00:15, PO Echanique pats down the teenage black male's waistband and legs. A male officer says, "Boys, you don't have anything on you, do you? Stand up for me real quick." At 00:23, the camera pans to a Black man, identified via investigation as \$87(2) who is wearing blue jeans, black and blue sneakers, and a dark blue sweatshirt, and who is sitting on a crate holding a cellphone. At 00:28, in response to \$87(2) saying something unintelligible, a male officer reaches towards \$87(2) s waistband and says, "Just weed? Okay." At 00:29, the camera pans to a teenage Black male with ear-length braids who is wearing a red tracksuit. Sgt. Signorile begins to pat down this individual's sweatshirt pocket and front right pants pocket, before the camera pans to PO Echanique, who approaches \$87(2)(0)

PO Echanique testified that the teenage male in the teal tracksuit whom he frisked tried to discreetly extinguish a marijuana cigarette as the officers approached the group. Based on how the individual tried to turn away, be discreet, and conceal something from the officers, PO Echanique believed he may have been armed. The individual bladed his body away from the officers which is common for individuals who are concealing firearms to do. However, this individual was not concealing a firearm, but instead narcotics. If he would have taken off running, PO Echanique would have thought the individual was trying to conceal something more serious, but he did not take off running. PO Echanique recovered marijuana on this individual but used his discretion and did not issue him a summons. PO Echanique denied entering this individual's pockets and did not know if any other officer did so. He did not see any other officers search or frisk any civilian because he was concentrating on the interactions he was having.

Sgt. Signorile testified that he frisked the individual in the red tracksuit by placing his hands over the outside of his clothes around the waist, over the pockets, and down the legs to ensure he did not have any weapons. He did this for the officers' safety and because he had probable cause to do so due to the marijuana. He had reason to believe individuals may have been armed because some of them were leaning against a parked car such that their bodies were turned away from the officers, and the officers could not see their pockets clearly. If civilians do not turn to face him, it suggests to Sgt. Signorile that they are trying to hide something, especially if he cannot see their waistline or pockets. Additionally, the individuals were "chirping" or mouthing off to the officers, though he did not recall what they said specifically, which he thought they may have been doing to distract the officers, potentially because they were armed. Sgt. Signorile did not observe any weapon-shaped bulges in any of the individuals' clothes. Sgt. Signorile did not recall the result of the frisk, though he assumed it was negative for weapons because he took no further enforcement action. Sgt. Signorile denied that he or any other officer present went inside the individual in the red tracksuit's pockets, as that would have been considered a search and he and his officers are aware of the

difference in protocol between a frisk and a search.

PO Vargas and PO Echevarria did not remember if they frisked or searched any civilian, or if any officer did so. When presented with the cellphone video (**Board Review 03**), their independent recollections of any civilians being frisked or searched were not refreshed. They both said they did not have any reason to believe the civilians in the group were armed.

When presented with the cellphone footage (**Board Review 03**), PO Vargas, PO Echevarria, PO Echanique, and Sgt. Signorile, all could not identify the officer who ordered (b) to stand up.

As noted above within the analysis of Allegations A through C, requests for warrant audits (**Board Review 11**) and Stop Reports (**Board Review 12**) were returned negative.

<u>People v. DeBour</u>, 40 N.Y. 2d. 210 (1976) (**Board Review 19**), states that, "an officer may frisk an individual when they reasonably suspect that the individual may be armed and present a risk of harm to the officer. If an apparent weapon is revealed during a frisk, a limited search may be conducted only of the area where the apparent weapon was discovered." In <u>People v. Brock</u>, 154 A.D.2d 231 (1989) (**Board Review 20**), the Court found that an officer was not justified in frisking an individual whom he observed continually turning his body away and not facing the officer, since the officer did not see a budge or outline of a gun on the individual. In <u>People v. Arviello</u>, 133 A.D.2d 589 (1987) (**Board Review 21**), the Court determined officers were not justified in frisking an individual solely based on his presence in a high crime area.

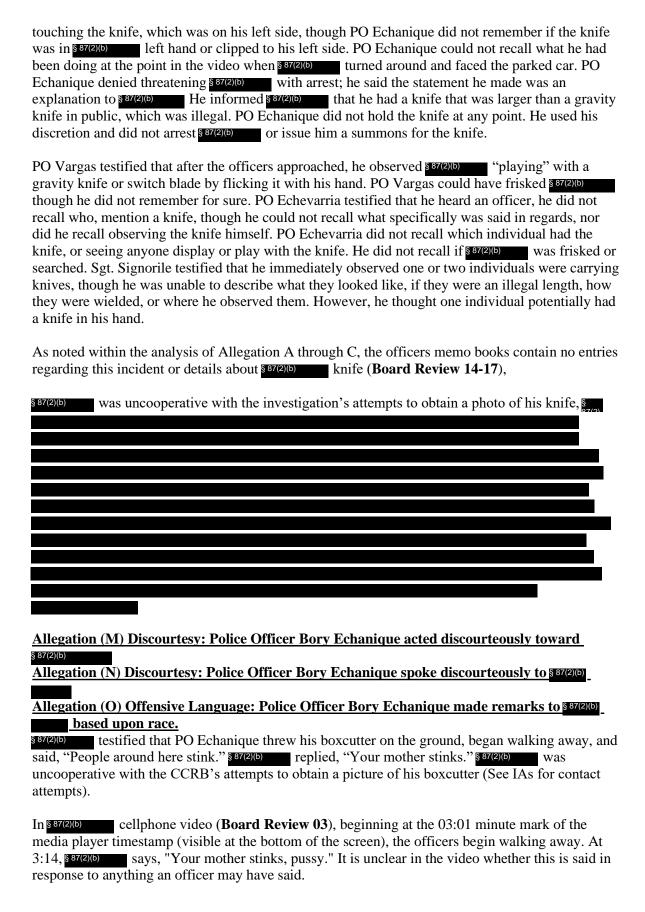
§ 87(2)(g)
§ 87(2)(g)
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§ 87(2)(g)
8 87(2) 8 87(2)(b)
Allegation (J) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Bory Echanique frisked
Allegation (K) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Bory Echanique searched \$87(2)(6)
Allegation (L) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Bory Echanique threatened to arrest \$87(2)(b)

cellphone video (**Board Review 03**), beginning at the 00:30 minute mark of the media player timestamp (visible at the bottom of the screen), PO Echanique, who is standing in front of \$37(2)(b) says, "Besides that knife in your pocket, anything else we missed?" PO Echanique walks closer to \$87(2)(b) such that his torso occupies the entire frame. \$87(2)(b) replies no and asks why PO Echanique is searching him. At 00:49, PO Echanique says he can because he has a knife in public. \$ 87(2)(5) says it is for his job. PO Echanique asks where \$37(2)(b) works, and \$37(2)(b) says he works for the Parks Department. At 00:56, PO Echanique says he has to put it away and orders \$87(2)(b) to turn around. \$87(2)(b) says he will put the knife away but that PO Echanique is still searching him. PO Echanique orders him to turn around. §87(2)(b) asks why PO Echanique is stopping and frisking him. PO Echanique's hands are not visible. At 01:20, \$67(2)(5) asks PO Echanique multiple times to stop touching him; PO Echanique's hands are not visible. At 01:30, PO Echanique orders \$87(2)(6) to turn around twice. says no and repeatedly asks if he has committed a crime. At 01:40, PO Echanique says, "Sir, I can take you in for a violation, I'll do that." \$37(2)(5) says, "Go ahead, take me for the knife, then. Go ahead." The camera pans to a black sedan as \$87(2)(b) turns around. \$87(2)(b) says, "Lock me up for the knife," repeatedly. PO Echanique says, "If I want to, I'll lock you up for the knife." At 02:07, §37(2)(b) says, "It's keys" and "Let go." PO Echanique says, "That's not gonna happen, alright?" \$87(2)(b) laughs. At 02:25, \$87(2)(b) repeatedly asks the officers to let his arm go. An officer tells \$87(2)(6) to relax. \$87(2)(6) begins yelling that the officers do not have the right to stop and frisk him and are violating his rights. In PO Echevarria's BWC footage (Board Review 01), beginning at the 00:39 minute mark of the media player timestamp (visible at the bottom of the screen), PO Echevarria walks towards PO Echanique and \$87(2)(b) who is standing up against a black SUV. At 00:48, PO Echevarria faces a group of approximately 10 males who are standing under an awning and watching [887(2)(b)] the officers. At 01:05, \$37(2)(b) tells PO Echanique and PO Vargas, "That doesn't give you the right to search me," to PO Echanique and PO Vargas. PO Echevarria says, "My man, he saw your knife," before he and the officers begin to walk away. statement was generally consistent with the cellphone video and BWC footage. He testified that PO Echanique approached him as he was leaning his back against \$37(2) s car and ordered him to put his hands up before he searched him. \$87(2)(0) was wearing black pants, a blue and black Nike shirt, and grey and blue sneakers. In his left front pants pocket, he had \$150 to \$200 in cash folded up, and in his right front pants pocket, he had a keyring with three keys, a lipsticksized flashlight, a square cellphone-sized wallet, and a boxcutter hooked onto the pocket with a clip similar to the clip on a pen. The blade was retractable and approximately two to three inches long. was uncooperative with providing a photo of the knife to the investigation.] §87(2)(b) said PO Echanique put his hand inside \$87(2)(b) front pants pockets, patted down \$87(2)(b) waistline and his right leg, and lifted up \$87(2)(b) outer shirt. PO Echanique told \$87(2)(b) he could be arrested. §87(2)(b) said, "Alright, arrest me then," and turned around so that his back was facing the officers. Sgt. Signorile grabbed \$87(2)(5) left arm and brought it behind his back and PO Echanique searched the inside of \$87(2)(b) back pants pockets. PO Echanique testified that §87(2)(b) had a silver knife in his hand, which he was "playing" with in order to "catch [the officers'] attention." The knife's clip came down towards §87(2)(b) so PO Echanique estimated that the blade would have been larger than a hand, though he did not extend it out himself. Based on its approximate length and the fact that it did not appear to have a retractable blade, PO Echanique determined that it was not a gravity or utility knife. PO Echanique denied frisking or searching \$87(2)(b) Instead, he wanted to make sure he cleared \$87(2)(b)

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hands away from the knife. In order do so, PO Echanique motioned in that area. [87(2)(6)]

stopped



PO Echevarria's BWC footage ends prior to this point in time of the incident (see OPMN).

PO Echanique, PO Echevarria, PO Vargas, and Sgt. Signorile all denied hearing PO Echanique say, "People around hear stink." PO Echanique denied taking save knife and denied throwing it on the ground, and PO Echevarria denied seeing PO Echanique do this. PO Vargas and Sgt. Signorile did not recall seeing PO Echanique take save knife and throw it on the ground.

§ 87(2)(g)

Allegation (P) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Bory Echanique failed to provide with a business card.

Allegation (Q) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Bory Echanique failed to provide individuals with a business card.

Allegation (R) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile failed to provide with a business card.

Allegation (S) Abuse of Authority: Sergeant Joseph Signorile failed to provide individuals with a business card.

Allegation (T) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer John Echevarria failed to provide individuals with a business card.

Allegation (U) Abuse of Authority: Police Officer Dennis Vargas failed to provide individuals with a business card.

testified that none of the civilian present, including himself, were arrested or summonsed, and that no one received a business card from any of the officers. He did not ask for any officer for a business card, and was unsure if anyone else did.

Sgt. Signorile, PO Echevarria, and PO Echanique's statements all corroborated statements all corroborated testimony that none of the officers offered any business cards to any civilians. Sgt. Signorile and PO Echevarria both said they did not do so because they were not required to, and Sgt. Signorile explained that this was because the stops were probable cause stops, not a Level 3 stop. PO Echanique said he did not do so because he showed his shield to say during the incident and thought that was sufficient. PO Vargas did not remember if he provided any civilians with his business card, or if other officers did so. However, he acknowledged that this incident would have been one in which the officers would have been required to due to the frisk of the individual with a knife.

Officers are required to offer a business card upon the conclusion of law enforcement activities, including stops, frisks, and searches of persons, except in cases when a summons is issued, or an arrest is made. NYPD Administrative Guide, Procedure 304-11 (Board Review 22).

As discussed within the analysis of Allegation A through C, [87(2)(6)] alleged that the group of approximately 11 to 13 individuals, including himself and [87(2)] were stopped by the officers, and though the officers' testimony regarding the number of individuals in the group differed, they all acknowledged that individuals were stopped. Additionally, the cellphone video captures PO Echanique and Sgt. Signorile each frisking one individual, respectively. [87(2)(9)]

§ 87(2)(g)
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Civilian and Officer CCRB Histories
• This is the first complaint to which \$87(2)(b) has been a party (Board Review 26).
PO Echanique has been a member of service for six years and has been a subject in two
CCRB complaints and seven allegations, none of which were substantiated.
§ 87(2)(g)
Set Signarile has been a member of service for 11 years and has been a subject in nine
• Sgt. Signorile has been a member of service for 11 years and has been a subject in nine CCRB complaints and 26 allegations, four of which were substantiated.
 Case #201902427 involved a substantiated allegation of a discourteous word. The
Board recommended formalized training and the NYPD imposed instructions.
o Case #201601216 involved substantiated allegations of a frisk, a search of person,
and a vehicle search. The Board recommended Command Disciple B and the NYPD imposed Command Disciple A.
S 87(2)(g)

§ 87(2)(g)

- PO Vargas has been a member of service seven years and has been a subject in 14 CCRB complaints and 42 allegations, two of which were substantiated.
 - Case #201904508 involved a substantiated allegation of a failure to provide a business card. The Board recommended command level instructions. The NYPD did not impose discipline.
 - Case #201506210 involved a substantiated allegation of an entry and a search. The Board recommended Charges and the NYPD imposed a forfeiture of three vacation days.
 - § 87(2)(g)
- PO Echevarria has been a member of service for nine years and has been a subject in seven CCRB complaints and 12 allegations, one of which was substantiated.
 - o Case #201800538 involved a substantiated allegation of a search of person. The Board recommended charges. The NYPD has not yet imposed discipline.
 - S 87(2)(9)

Mediation, Civil and Criminal Histories

- §87(2)(b) declined to mediate this complaint.
- As of March 3, 2022, the NYC Office of the Comptroller has no record of a Notice of Claim being filed in regards to this incident (**Board Review 27**).
- According to the Office of Court Administration (OCA), [887(2)(0)] has no history of convictions in New York City (**Board Review 28**).

Squad No.:	13		
Investigator:	Signature	Inv. Ariana Thomas Print Title & Name	3/3/2022 Date
Squad Leader:	Signature	IM Laura Kastner Print Title & Name	03/03/2022 Date